



The Blair Sunday-Rest Bill

ESR

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
National Sabbath Union	14
The Bill with Changes Desired by the American Sabbath Union	17
Union of Church and State	24
Effect of the Law	27
Pious Frauds	30
Petitions from National Bodies	36

It is safe to say that the name of Senator M. W. Blair has, in a short space of time, become more familiar to the people of the United States than that of any other senator who has done no greater amount of work, and that the “Blair Bills” have been referred to oftener than any other measures that have been introduced into the Senate. People who easily pay attention to what goes on in Congress, have talked of the bills as familiarly as though it had been the business of their lives to watch legislation. Many have spoken thus familiarly of them, who have very little knowledge of what those bills are, when and why they were introduced, and what effect their passage would have. It is to answer those questions, and some others that would naturally grow out of them, especially in regard to the first bill introduced, that this is written.*BSRB 3.1*

On the 6th of April, 1886, the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, Senator H. W. Blair, chairman, gave a hearing to the friends of the Sunday. That Committee is composed of the following ... Senators: Blair, of New Hampshire; Bowen, of Colorado, Palmer, of Michigan; Wilson, of Iowa; Riddleberger, of Virginia; George, of Mississippi; Call, of Florida; Pugh, of Alabama; and Payne, of Ohio. Mrs. J. C. Bateham, Superintendent of the Sabbath Observance Department of the National Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, opened the discussion by reading a paper setting forth the reasons which led them to ask for a Sunday law. Rev. W. F. Crafts, pastor of the First Union Presbyterian Church, New York City, then followed with an address. As some of the main points in this address were repeated at the second hearing, in December, they will be noticed in connection with that. Other addresses were given by the following persons: Dr. T. A. Fernley, secretary of the Philadelphia Sabbath Association; Rev. M. P. Nice, secretary of the Maryland Sabbath Association; Rev. Yates Hickey, secretary of the International Sabbath Association; and Rev. Dr. George Elliott, author of “The Abiding Sabbath.” The *Union Signal* (organ of the National W.C.T.U.), in its issue of May 3, 1888, after reciting the above facts said: “Senator Blair will now draft and present a bill for us.”*BSRB 3.2*

Before proceeding to a consideration of this bill, it will be well to have in mind what had taken place previous to this. While there has been a great deal of Sunday legislation by the various States, the

record of attempts at National legislation is very brief. In 1828-29 petitions were laid before Congress, asking for the discontinuance of Sunday mails. Hon. Richard M. Johnson, of the committee to which the matter was referred, presented the following masterly address, which should be carefully studied, as it is a concise summary of the argument against Sunday legislation:—*BSRB 4.1*

“The committee to whom were referred the several petitions, on the subject of mails on the Sabbath, or first day of the week, report:—*BSRB 5.1*

“That some respite is required from the ordinary vocations of life is an established principle, sanctioned by the usages of all nations, whether Christian or pagan. One day in seven has also been determined upon as the proportion of time; and inconformity with the wishes of a great majority of the citizens of this country, the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, has been set apart to that object. The principle has received the sanction of the National Legislature, so far as to admit a suspension of all public business on that day, except in cases of absolute necessity, or of great public utility. This principle the committee would not wish to disturb. If kept within its legitimate sphere of action, no injury can result from its observance. It should, however, be kept in mind that *the proper object of government is to protect all persons in the enjoyment of their religious as well as civil rights, and not to determine for any whether they shall esteem one day above another, or esteem all days alike holy.**BSRB 5.2*

“We are aware that a variety of sentiment exists among the good citizens of this nation, on the subject of the Sabbath day; and our Government is designed for the protection of one as much as another. The Jews, who in this country are as free as Christians, and entitled to the same protection from the laws, derive their obligation to keep the Sabbath day from the fourth commandment of their decalogue, and in conformity with that injunction pay religious homage to the seventh day of the week, which we call Saturday. One denomination of Christians among us, justly celebrated for their piety, and certainly as good citizens as any other class, agree with the Jews in the moral obligation of the Sabbath, and observe the same day. There are, also, many

Christians among us who derive not their obligation to observe the Sabbath from the decalogue, but regard the Jewish Sabbath as abrogated. From the example of the apostles of Christ, they have chosen the first day of the week instead of that day set apart in the decalogue, for their religious devotions. These have generally regarded the observance of the day as a devotional exercise, and would not more readily, enforce it upon others than they would enforce secret prayer or devout meditations.*BSRB 5.3*

“Urging the fact that neither their Lord nor his disciples, though often censured by their accusers for a violation of the Sabbath, ever enjoined its observance, they regard it as a subject on which every person should be fully persuaded in his own mind, and not coerce others to act upon his persuasion. Many Christians, again, differ from these, professing to derive their obligation to observe the Sabbath from the fourth commandment of the Jewish decalogue, and bring the example of the apostles, who appear to have held their public meetings for worship on the first day of the week, as authority for so far changing the decalogue as to substitute that day for the seventh. The Jewish Government was a theocracy, which enforced religious observances; and though the committee would hope that no portion of the citizens of our country would willingly introduce a system of religious coercion in our civil institutions, the example of other nations should admonish us to watch carefully against its earliest indication. With these different religious views, the committee are of opinion that Congress cannot interfere. *It is not the legitimate province of the Legislature to determine what religion is true, or what false.**BSRB 6.1*

“Our Government is a civil, and not a religious institution. Our Constitution recognizes in every person the right to choose his own religion, and to enjoy it freely, without molestation. Whatever may be the religious sentiments of citizens, and however variant, they are alike entitled to protection from the Government, so long as they do not invade the rights of others. The transportation of the mail on the first day of the week, it is believed, does not interfere with the rights of conscience. The petitioners for its discontinuance appear to be actuated by a religious zeal, which may be commendable if confined to its proper sphere; but they assume a position better suited to an ecclesiastical than to a civil institution. They appear in

many instances to lay it down as an axiom, that the practice is a violation of the law of God. Should Congress in legislative capacity adopt the sentiment, it would establish the principle that the Legislature is a proper tribunal to determine what are the laws of God. It would involve a legislative decision on a religious controversy, and on a point in which good citizens may honestly differ in opinion, without disturbing the peace of society or endangering its liberties. If this principle is once introduced, it will be impossible to define its bounds.*BSRB 6.2*

“Among all the religious persecutions with which almost every page of modern history is stained, no victim ever suffered but for the violation of what government denominated the law of God. To prevent a similar train of evils in this country, the Constitution has wisely withheld from our Government the power of defining the divine law. It is a right reserved to each citizen; and while he respects the rights of others, he cannot be held amenable to any human tribunal for his conclusions. Extensive religious combinations to effect a political object, are, in the opinion of the committee, always dangerous. This first effort of the kind calls for the establishment of a principle, which, in the opinion of the committee, would lay the foundation for dangerous innovations upon the spirit of the Constitution, and upon the religious rights of the citizens. If admitted, it may be justly apprehended that the future measures of the Government will be strongly marked, if not eventually controlled, by the same influence. All religious despotism commences by combination and influence; and when that influence begins to operate upon the political institutions of a country, the civil power soon bends under it; and the catastrophe of other nations furnishes an awful warning of the consequence.”BSRB 7.1

“Under the present regulations of the Post-office Department, the rights of conscience are not invaded. Every agent enters voluntarily, and it is presumed conscientiously, into the discharge of his duties, without intermeddling with the conscience of another. Post-offices are so regulated that but a small proportion of the first day of the week is required to be occupied in official business. In the transportation of the mail on that day, no one agent is employed many hours. Religious persons enter into the business without violating their own consciences or imposing any restraints upon

others. Passengers in the mail stages are free to rest during the first day of the week, or to pursue their journeys at their own pleasure. While the mail is transported on Saturday, the Jew and the Sabbatarian may abstain from any agency in carrying it, on conscientious scruples. While it is transported on the first day of the week, another class may abstain, from the same religious scruples. The obligation of Government is the same on both these classes; and the committee can discover no principle on which the claims of one should be more respected than those of the other; unless it be admitted that the consciences of the minority are less sacred than those of the majority.*BSRB 8.1*

“It is the opinion of the committee that the subject should be regarded simply as a question of expediency, irrespective of its religious bearing. In this light it has hitherto been considered. Congress has never legislated upon the subject. It rests, as it ever has done, in the legal discretion of the Postmaster-General, under the repeated refusals of Congress to discontinue the Sabbath mails. His knowledge and judgment in all the concerns of that department, will not be questioned. His intense labors and assiduity have resulted in the highest improvement of every branch of his department. It is practiced only on the great leading mail routes, and such others as are necessary to maintain their connections. To prevent this, would, in the opinion of the committee, be productive of immense injury, both in its commercial and political, and also its moral bearings. The various departments of government require, frequently in peace, always in war, the speediest intercourse with the remotest parts of the country; and one important object of the mail establishment is to furnish the greatest and most economical facilities for such intercourse. The delay of the mails one whole day in seven would require the employment of special expresses, at great expense, and sometimes with great uncertainty.*BSRB 8.2*

“The commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural interests of the country are so intimately connected as to require a constant and most expeditious correspondence betwixt all our seaports, and betwixt them and the most interior settlements. The delay of the mails during the Sunday would give occasion for the employment of private expresses, to such an amount that probably ten riders would be employed where one mail stage would be running on that day,

thus diverting the revenue of that department into another channel, and sinking the establishment into a state of pusillanimity incompatible with the dignity of the Government of which it is a department.*BSRB 9.1*

“Passengers in the mail stages, if the mails are not permitted to proceed on Sunday, will be expected to spend that day at a tavern upon the road, generally under circumstances not friendly to devotion, and at an expense which many are but poorly able to encounter. To obviate these difficulties, many will employ extra carriages for their conveyance, and become the bearers of correspondence, as more expeditious than the mail. The stage proprietors will themselves often furnish the travelers with those means of conveyance; so that the effect will ultimately be only to stop the mail, while the vehicle which conveys it will continue, and its passengers become the special messengers for conveying a considerable portion of what otherwise constitutes the contents of the mail. Nor can the committee discover where the system could consistently end. If the observance of a holiday becomes incorporated in our institutions, shall we not forbid the movement of an army; prohibit an assault in time of war; and lay an injunction upon our naval officers to lie in the wind while upon the ocean on that day? Consistency would seem to require it. Nor is it certain that we should stop here. *If the principle is once established, that religion, or religious observances, shall be interwoven with our legislative acts, we must pursue it to its ultimatum.* We shall, if consistent, provide for the erection of edifices for worship of the Creator, and for the support of Christian ministers, if we believe such measures will promote the interests of Christianity. It is the settled conviction of the committee, that the only method of avoiding these consequences, with their attendant train of evils, is to adhere strictly to the spirit of the Constitution, which regards the general Government in no other light than that of a civil institution, wholly destitute of religious authority. *What other nations call religious toleration, we call religious rights. They are not exercised in virtue of governmental indulgence, but as rights, of which Government cannot deprive any portion of citizens, however small. Despotism may invade those rights, but justice still confirms them.**BSRB 9.2*

“Let the National Legislature once perform an act which involves the decision of a religious controversy, and it will have passed its legitimate bounds. The precedent will then be established, and the foundation laid, for that usurpation of the divine prerogative in this country which has been the desolating scourge to the fairest portions of the Old World.”*BSRB 10.1*

“Our Constitution recognizes no other power than that of persuasion, for enforcing religious observances. Let the professors of Christianity recommend their religion by deeds of benevolence, by Christian meekness, by lives of temperance and holiness. Let them combine their efforts to instruct the ignorant, to relieve the widow and the orphan, to promulgate to the world the gospel of their Saviour, recommending its precepts by their habitual example; Government will find its legitimate object in protecting them. It cannot oppose them, and they will not need its aid. *Their moral influence will then do infinitely more to advance the true interests of religion, than any measure which they may call on Congress to enact.* The petitioners do not complain of any infringement upon their own rights. They enjoy all that Christians ought to ask at the hands of any Government-protection from all molestation in the exercise of their religious sentiments.”*BSRB 11.1*

“Resolved, That the committee be discharged from any further consideration of the subject.”*BSRB 11.2*

This recommendation was heartily concurred in by the Senate, and the matter was dropped.”*BSRB 11.3*

In 1883, the “International Sabbath Association” petitioned Congress for a law against Sunday mails, Sunday railroad trains, and Sunday parades. Only a few thousand persons were represented in this petition, and nothing came of it. As the secretary, Rev. Yates Hickey, said, “The time did not seem to be ripe.”*BSRB 11.4*

In 1884, Rev. Wilbur F. Crafts prepared a petition to Congress for a law against Sunday work in the mail and military service, and in inter-State commerce. It was not till after this that the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union added a “Sabbath Observance Department” to its work, with Mrs. Josephine C. Bateham, of Ohio,

as its superintendent. Mrs. Bateham immediately went to work in a systematic manner to secure legislation in behalf of Sunday observance, seeking first to secure signatures to the petition prepared by Mr. Crafts. Through her efforts, and those of her numerous assistants, the number of petitioners is said to have been increased to a million and a half. These were sent to the United States Senate, and were referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, before whom the hearing was soon had (April 6, 1888) by Mrs. Bateham and her fellow-workers, as related in the beginning. In response to these petitions and the appeals made to the committee at this time, and in accordance with his promise, as quoted from the *Union Signal* of May 3, Mr. Blair drafted the following, which is popularly known as the "Sunday-Rest Bill," (Senate Bill, No. 2983) and introduced it into the Senate, May 21, 1888:—*BSRB 11.5*

A BILL TO SECURE TO THE PEOPLE THE ENJOYMENT OF THEIR FIRST DAY, AS A DAY OF REST, AND TO PROMOTE ITS OBSERVANCE AS A DAY OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.*BSRB 12.1*

*Be it enacted in the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That no person or corporation, or the agent, servant, or employ é of any person or corporation, shall perform or authorize to be performed, any secular work, labor, or business, to the disturbance of others, works of necessity, mercy, and humanity excepted; nor shall any person engage in any play, game, or amusement, or recreation, to the disturbance of others, on the first day of the week, commonly known as the Lord's day, or during any part thereof, in any Territory, District, vessel, or place, subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States; nor shall it be lawful for any person or corporation to receive pay for labor or service performed or rendered in violation of this section.**BSRB 12.2*

SECTION 2. That no mails or mail matter shall hereafter be transported in time of peace over any land postal route, nor shall any mail matter be collected, assorted, handled or delivered during any part of the first day of the week; *Provided*, That whenever any letter shall relate to work of necessity or mercy, or shall concern the health, life, or decease of any person, and the fact shall be plainly

stated upon the face of the envelope containing the same, the Postmaster-General shall provide for the transportation of such letter or letters in packages separate from other mail matter, and shall make regulations for the delivery thereof, the same having been received at its place of destination before the said first day of the week, during such limited portion of the day as shall best suit the public convenience and least interfere with the due observance of the day as one of worship and rest: *And provided further*, That when there shall have been an interruption in the due and regular transmission of the mails, it shall be lawful to so far examine the same when delivered as to ascertain if there be such matter therein for lawful delivery on the first day of the week.*BSRB 13.1*

SEC. 3. That the prosecution of commerce between the States and with the Indian tribes, the same not being work of necessity, mercy, nor humanity, by the transportation of persons or property by land or water in such way as to interfere with or disturb the people in the enjoyment of the first day of the week, or any portion thereof, as a day of rest from labor, the same not being labor of necessity, mercy, or humanity, or its observance as a day of religious worship, is hereby prohibited; and any person or corporation, or the agent or employé of any person or corporation, who shall willfully violate this section, shall be punished by a fine of not less than ten nor more than one thousand dollars; and no service performed in the prosecution of such prohibited commerce shall be lawful, nor shall any compensation be recoverable or be paid for the same.*BSRB 13.2*

SEC. 4. That all military and naval drills, musters, and parades, not in time of active service or immediate preparation therefore, of soldiers, sailors, marines, or cadets of the United States, on the first day of the week, except assemblies for the due and orderly observance of religious worship, are hereby prohibited, nor shall any unnecessary labor be performed or permitted in the military or naval service of the United States on the Lord's day.*BSRB 14.1*

SEC. 5. That it shall be unlawful to pay or to receive payment or wages in any manner for service rendered, or for labor performed, or for the transportation of persons or of property in violation of the provisions of this act, nor shall any action lie for the recovery

thereof; and when so paid, whether in advance or otherwise, the same may be recovered back by whoever shall first sue for the same.*BSRB 14.2*

SEC. 6. That labor or service performed and rendered on the first day of the week in consequence of accident, disaster, or unavoidable delays in making the regular connections upon postal-routes and routes of travel and transportation, the preservation of perishable and exposed property, and the regular and necessary transportation and delivery of articles of food in condition for healthy use, and such transportation for short distances from one State, District, or Territory, into another State, District, or Territory, as by local laws shall be declared to be necessary for the public good, shall not be deemed violations of this act, but the same shall be construed, so far as possible, to secure to the whole people rest from toil during the first day of the week, their mental and moral culture, and the religious observance of the Sabbath day.*BSRB 14.3*

This bill should not be confounded with the “Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, respecting establishments of religion and free public schools,” which was introduced by Mr. Blair into the Senate, May 25, 1888, and which is known as the Blair Educational Amendment bill. As the Educational Amendment bill has nothing to do with the Sunday-Rest bill, we leave the examination of it for another time.*BSRB 15.1*

The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, and the various “Sabbath Associations” already referred to, immediately began the work of circulating a petition asking Congress to pass the Sunday-Rest bill. That petition was addressed to each House of Congress, and reads as follows:—*BSRB 15.2*

“The undersigned, adult residents of the United States, twenty-one years of age or more, hereby earnestly petition your honorable body to pass a bill, forbidding, in the nation’s mail and military service, and in inter-State commerce, and in the District of Columbia and the Territories, all Sunday traffic and work, except works of religion and works of real necessity and mercy, and such private work, by those who observe another day, as will not interfere with the general rest

nor with public worship.”*BSRB 15.3*

These petitions were circulated with great enthusiasm by the various churches of the land, and the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, and an unprecedented list of names was secured. Of the methods by which these names were secured, we shall speak later on.*BSRB 15.4*

National Sabbath Union

Meanwhile steps were taken toward the formation of a “National Sabbath Committee.” Early in 1888 Rev. W. F. Crafts had the following petition circulated among the officers of Sunday Associations:—*BSRB 16.1*

“To the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church:—BSRB 16.2

“DEAR FATHERS AND BRETHREN: The undersigned earnestly petition you as the representatives of the largest denomination of American Christians, to take the initiative in forming a National Sabbath Committee, by appointing several persons to serve in your behalf on such a committee, with instructions to ask other religious bodies, in your name, to appoint representatives to serve on the same committee, in order that the invasion of our day of rest and worship by the united forces of the liquor traffic and its allies, may be successfully resisted by the united forces of American Christianity, in the interest alike of the church and of the nation, of morality and of liberty.”*BSRB 16.3*

With the co-operation of Rev. J. H. Knowles, editor of the *Pearl of Days*, this was presented to the Methodist General Conference, which held its session in New York during the month of May, 1888, where it was favorably received. A committee was appointed and authorized to confer with official representatives of other denominations at their general councils. The Home Missionary Society of the Baptist Church, the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (North and South), and the Synod of the Reformed Church, whose meetings were held shortly afterward, and several other denominations, joined the movement and appointed members to act on the committee.*BSRB 16.4*

On November 13, 1888, the persons who had been thus appointed, met in the parlor of Col. Elliott F. Shepard, editor of the *New York Mail and Express*, and organized the “National Sabbath Committee.” Mr. Shepard was elected President, and Rev. J. H. Knowles, General Secretary and Editor of Publications, to serve until the first annual meeting.*BSRB 17.1*

This annual meeting, together with the “First National Sabbath Convention,” was held in the Foundry Methodist Episcopal Church, Washington, D. C., December 11-13, 1888. The speakers at this meetings were: Rev. J. H. Knowles, Mrs. J. C. Bateham, Gen. A. S. Diven, Rev. F. W. Conrad, D.D., editor of the *Lutheran Observer*; Rev. T. A. Fernley, Bishop John F. Hurst, D.D., of the M. E. Church; Hon. Carroll D. Wright, Hon. Nelson Dingley, Rev. W. F. Crafts, Rev. W. W. Everts, D.D., Hon. G. P. Lord, Rev. George Elliott, Rev. C. H. Payne, D.D., Prof. Herrick Johnson, D.D., and Rev. James Stacy, D.D. Besides the above-named persons, the following are some of the most prominent of those who co-operated in the work of the council: Rev. Byron Sunderland, D.D., Hon. A. M. Clapp, Rev. G. H. Cory, D.D., Rev. S. H. Green, Mrs. J. Ellen Foster, Rev. E. Erskine, D.D., Rev. C. R. Hunt, and Mr. John Edmunds *BSRB 17.2*

The greater part of the foregoing particulars may be found in the January number of *Our Day*, edited by Joseph Cook. *BSRB 17.3*

Among the resolutions adopted at that meeting are the following:
—*BSRB 18.1*

“First. That we declare our conviction that the fourth commandment, like all the other commandments of the decalogue, is of universal and perpetual obligation. *BSRB 18.2*

“Second. That the American Sabbath Union, while recognizing the value of arguments for the Sabbath from expediency and physical health, still regards its chief work the quickening of the Christian conscience upon this subject.” *BSRB 18.3*

“Fifth. That in view of the neglect to enforce Sunday laws designed for the conservation of public morality and order, and to protect the liberty of Sabbath rest and worship, it has become an imperative necessity that Christians should insist that the officers of the law perform their duty.” *BSRB 18.4*

The first three articles of the Constitution are these:—*BSRB 18.5*

“I.—NAME. The American Sabbath Union. *BSRB 18.6*

“II.—BASIS. The basis of this Union is the divine authority and universal and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath, as manifested in the order and constitution of nature, declared in the revealed will of God, formulated in the fourth commandment of the moral law, interpreted and applied by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, transferred to the Christian Sabbath or Lord’s day, by Christ and his apostles, and approved by its beneficial effects upon national life.”*BSRB 18.7*

“III.—OBJECT. The object of this Union is to preserve the Christian Sabbath as a day of rest and worship.”*BSRB 18.8*

From the foregoing it will be seen that the “American Sabbath Union” is a religious organization, having for its object the securing of laws enforcing the religious observance of Sunday. This will be seen still more clearly when we examine closely the bill which they pray may become a law, and read their statements concerning it. The original bill appears on pages 12-15, but the Union at the Convention in Washington appointed a “special committee,” consisting of Col. Elliott F. Shepard, Bishop J. F. Hurst, Dr. Sunderland, Dr. Ruskin, Dr. Knowles, Dr. Elliott, and others, with Mrs. J. Ellen Foster as legal adviser, to revise it. That committee recommended changes, so that it would read as follows:—*BSRB 18.9*

The Bill with Changes Desired by the American Sabbath Union

Unanimously adopted December 12, 1888. (Changes indicated by the full-face letters and stars.)*BSRB 19.1*

A Bill to secure to the People the enjoyment of the Lord's Day, commonly known as Sunday, as a Day of Rest, and to Protect its observance as a Day of Religious Worship.*BSRB 19.2*

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That on Sunday, no person or corporation, or the agent, servant, or employé of any person or corporation, shall perform, or authorize to be performed, any secular work, labor, or business, * * * works of necessity, mercy, and humanity excepted; nor shall any person engage in any play, game, show, exhibition, or amusement * * * open to the public, or of a public character, in any Territory, district, vessel, or place subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States; nor shall it be lawful for any person or corporation to receive pay for labor or service performed or rendered in violation of this section.*BSRB 19.3*

SEC. 2. That no mails or mail matter shall hereafter be transported in time of peace over any land postal route, nor shall any mail matter be collected, assorted, handled, or delivered during any part of Sunday.*BSRB 20.1*

SEC. That the prosecution of commerce between the States and with the Indian tribes, * * * by the transportation of persons or property by land or water * * * on the first day of the week * * * is hereby prohibited, and any person or corporation, or the agent or employé of any person or corporation, who shall * * * violate this section, shall be punished by a fine of not less than ten nor more than one thousand dollars, and no service performed in the prosecution of such prohibited commerce shall be lawful, nor shall any compensation be recoverable, or be paid for the same.*BSRB 20.2*

SEC. 4. That all military and naval drills, musters, and parades, not in time of active service or immediate preparation therefore, of

soldiers, sailors, marines, or cadets of the United States, on the first day of the week, except assemblies, are hereby prohibited; nor shall any unnecessary labor be performed or permitted in the military or naval service of the United States on the Lord's day.*BSRB 20.3*

SEC. 5. That it shall be unlawful to pay or to receive payment or wages in any manner for service rendered, or for labor performed, or for the transportation of persons or of property in violation of the provisions of this act, nor shall any action lie for the recovery thereof; and when so paid, whether in advance or otherwise, the same may be recovered back by whoever shall first sue for the same.*BSRB 20.4*

SEC. 6. That labor or service performed and rendered on Sunday in consequence of accident or disaster, or unavoidable delays in making the regular connections upon postal routes and routes of travel and transportation, the * * * transportation and delivery of milk before 5 A.M. and after 10 P.M. * * * shall not be deemed violations of this act, but the same shall be construed, so far as possible, to secure to the whole people rest from toil during Sunday, their mental and moral culture, and the protection of the religious observance of the * * * day.*BSRB 20.5*

By a comparison of the bold-faced letters and the stars with the corresponding portion of the original bill, the changes will be readily discerned. Following are, in part, the reasons given by the committee for the changes which they ask:—*BSRB 21.1*

“For religious purposes we prefer the name Lord's Day or Christian Sabbath; but as Sunday is already used in National laws, we think it better to use that uniformly in this bill, with the exception of the double name in the title.*BSRB 21.2*

“The word ‘promote,’ in the title, goes beyond what many, even your Christian citizens, believe to be the proper function of Government with reference to ‘religious worship,’ while the word ‘protect’ (see also last line), expresses a duty which Government owes to all legitimate institutions of the people.*BSRB 21.3*

“Experience in the courts has shown that the words ‘show,

exhibition,' should be added to the list of prohibited Sunday amusements, and the words, 'in public,' in place of 'to the disturbance of others,' as the latter clause has been construed as requiring that persons living in the neighborhood of a Sunday game or show must testify that they have been disturbed, in order to a conviction, which cannot be done in some cases without personal peril.*BSRB 21.4*

"In Section 2, we believe that the exceptions for letters relating to sickness, etc., are unnecessary in this age of the telegraph; and that they would be used by unscrupulous men in business correspondence, and that this would destroy most of the benefits of the law in its bearing on Sunday mails.*BSRB 21.5*

"In Section 3, we believe the exceptions made would greatly interfere with the administration of the law. The exception for works of mercy and necessity is made, once for all, in the first section. The reference to 'the disturbance of others' is objectionable, for reasons already given, and the word 'willfully' is an old offender in Sabbath legislation, and requires evidence very hard to get in regard to one's motive and knowledge of the law. In other laws it is assumed that one knows the law, and the law-making power should use that the laws are well published, and leave no room for one to escape by agnosticism.*BSRB 21.6*

"In Section 5 (as in Section 1 also), we would omit 'Lord's day,' and in Section 6, 'Sabbath,' in order to preserve uniformity in using the less religious term, Sunday.*BSRB 22.1*

"In Section 6, we think refrigerator cars make Sunday work in transportation of perishable food, except milk, unnecessary, and the new stock cars, with provision for food and water, do the same for stock trains. So many of the State Sunday laws have proved almost useless in protecting the rights of the people to Sunday rest and undisturbed worship, by the smallness of their penalties and the largeness of their exceptions, that we covet from Congress a law that shall make itself effective by small exceptions and large penalties."*BSRB 22.2*

We are now prepared to give the bill a brief analysis. Note first, that its object is "to secure to the people the enjoyment of the Lord's

day, commonly known as Sunday, as a day of rest, and to *protect its observance as a day of religious worship*.” A comparison of the bills will show that in the revision *pretext* has been substituted for *promote*. The actual difference, if there is any, is exceedingly slight. To protect means, “to cover, or shield from danger or injury; to defend, to guard.”—*Webster*. Now mark, that the object is not to protect people in their religious observance of the day. There is no need of asking Congress for such a law as that; for religious assemblies on any day of the week are everywhere most strictly protected from disturbance, and there are also laws amply sufficient to protect a man from disturbance in his own house on Sunday or any other day. No; it is not the *people*, but the *day*, for which they ask protection.*BSRB 22.3*

Now the only way the religious observance of *the day* can be protected, is by keeping people from violating it. If it were simply that those who conscientiously regard the day as sacred should be protected in their right to so regard it, and those who do not regard it as sacred were allowed to do as they please on it, that would be just the condition of things that now exists. The people would be protected, but the day would not be. It is evident, therefore, that the only thing that can be implied in the term “to protect the religious observance of the day,” is that all shall be compelled to observe the day, outwardly at least, in a religious manner.*BSRB 23.1*

That this is a just conclusion, may be seen from what Mr. Crafts said at the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, in Philadelphia, November 16, 1888. At the close of a speech which he made before that body, on the necessity of a Sunday law (reported in the *Journal of United Labor*, November 29, 1888), the following question was asked him:—*BSRB 23.2*

“Could not this weekly rest-day be secured without reference to religion, by having the workmen of an establishment scheduled in regular order for one day of rest per week, whichever was most convenient, not all resting on any one day.”*BSRB 23.3*

This was a fair question, and the plan suggested affords a perfect solution of the question, if the claim so often made be true, that the sole object of a Sunday law is the securing to working men of the

right to rest on one day in seven, in accordance with the requirements of nature. But notice Mr. Crafts's answer:—*BSRB 24.1*

“A weekly day of rest has never been secured in any land except on the basis of religious obligation. Take the religion out and you take the rest out.”*BSRB 24.2*

What could prove more plainly that the law which is desired is a law to compel all the people in the land to observe the first day of the week, not as a holiday, but as a day of religious rest? But we have still more evidence.*BSRB 24.3*

In the Washington convention, Mrs. Bateham, referring to the petitioners for a Sunday law, said:—*BSRB 24.4*

“They are praying that the Government will pass a law that will compel the people to observe the first day of the week.”—*From the report in the Lutheran Observer of December 21, 1888.BSRB 24.5*

Since the petitioners to which she referred were praying for the passage of the Blair Sunday-Rest bill, it is evident that that bill was framed with the design of compelling people to observe Sunday religiously. But we do not have to draw conclusions in regard to this point. The object of the bill is plainly declared in the following statement, which appeared in nearly all the religious papers that reported the meeting, and which seems to be credited to Dr. Crafts:—*BSRB 24.6*

“The bill which has been introduced makes Sunday the ideal Sabbath of the Puritans, which day shall be occupied only by worship. No amusement or recreation should be indulged in, no mail handled or railroads run except under pressing necessity, with a fine of from \$10 to \$1,000 as the penalty for non-observance of the law.”—*Lutheran Observer, December 21, 1888.BSRB 25.1*

Yet in the face of such statements as this we are told that “Sunday laws do not in any way interfere with true liberty, for they do not require any man to be religious.” This was said by Mr. Crafts in reply to a question put to him in the Knights of Labor Assembly, and reported in the *Journal of United Labor* November 29, 1888. It is

true enough that they will not make any man religious, because they cannot; but that they will not interfere with any man's liberty, is not true.*BSRB 25.2*

But although this law will not make any man religious, it is susceptible of the clearest proof that it was framed for the express purpose of contributing toward that end. Thus, Mr. Crafts, in the first hearing before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, in which a request was made for such a bill as has been presented, said:—*BSRB 25.3*

“The Postmaster-General agrees with me, and stated this morning, that it should not be possible for any post-master in this country to run the United States post-office as a rival and competitor and antagonist of the churches. The law allows the post-office to be kept open during the church hours unless the first mail of the day comes during those hours. If it comes five minutes or before the church service begins, the post-office can be run and is run in many cases all through church hours, as the rival and competitor and antagonist of the churches.”*BSRB 25.4*

“A law forbidding the opening of the United States post-office during the usual hours of public worship would remedy this difficulty, and would be better than nothing; but we desire more than this.”—*Report of Hearing (Miscellaneous Document, No. 43), p. 6.**BSRB 26.1*

Well, they have more than this. They have a bill framed which prohibits work on any part of Sunday. But let us analyze this desire, and see what there is in it. It is urged that the open post-office is a competitor of the church service. The same would be true, of course, to the same extent, of the store, the workshop, or any other place where business is done. Now when they get a law which is designed to give the churches a monopoly of Sunday, and find that ninety-nine per cent. of those who were formerly employed do not attend church, what will necessarily follow? Why, a law compelling them to attend church, of course. From their own statements, the ultimate design of the law is to benefit the churches; and when this law does not accomplish that design, the only way left will be to secure the object by more direct means. And this will be exactly in

line with what they want, namely, “the ideal Sabbath of the Puritan,” as will be seen by the following from Robert Wodrow, a Scotch ecclesiastical historian, or whom it is said that his “veracity was above suspicion,” and of his writings that “no historical facts are better ascertained than the accounts to be found in Wodrow”:
—*BSRB 26.2*

“It is thocht expedient that ane baillie with tua of the session passed throw the towne everie Sabbath day, and nott sic as they find absent fra the sermones ather afoir or efter none; and for that effect that they pass and *serche sic houss as they think maist meit.*”—*Selections from the Records of the Kirk Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberdeen.**BSRB 26.3*

In modern English this is as follows:—*BSRB 27.1*

“It is thought expedient that one bailiff with two of the session pass through the town every Sabbath day, and note such as they find absent from the sermons either before or after noon; and for that effect, that they pass and search such houses as they think most meet.”*BSRB 27.2*

In his “Collections” he says: “The session allows the searchers to go into houses and apprehend absents from the kirk.”*BSRB 27.3*

Since the law was asked for on the ground that open places of business keep people away from church on Sunday, and since they say that the proposed law will give them “the ideal Sabbath of the Puritans which day shall be occupied only by worship,” the conclusion is inevitable that the “American Sabbath Union” has entered upon a course which will end in nothing else but the forcing of everybody to attend church. That it will necessarily result in something even worse than this, we shall presently show. We do not charge the framers and abettors of this bill with any such deliberate intention. Few of them realize the inevitable result of the course upon which they have started, and we write with the hope that some may stop in their work before it is too late.*BSRB 27.4*

Union of Church and State

Notwithstanding the fact that the bill is wholly in the interest of the churches, and the religious observance of Sunday, which it styles “the Lord’s day,” we are told that they do not want a religious law, but only a civil law! Well, we don’t suppose that the civil government could enact any other kind of law than a civil law; but what we object to is a civil law enforcing a religious custom. It must be apparent to the most prejudiced mind, that the religious aspect of the day is uppermost in the minds of those who are working for the bill. But this will be as complete a union of Church and State as ever existed in Europe. In the days when the Inquisition was doing its bloody work, it was the civil government that put the heretics to death. They were all guilty of violating civil laws which the State had enacted at the instigation of the Church. That was all.*BSRB 28.1*

Take the resolutions adopted at the Washington Convention, and the constitution of the “American Sabbath Union,” and what do they say? Read again the resolutions that appear on page 18. From them it will be seen that the basis of their legislation is the fourth commandment. This is plainly declared in Article 2 of the constitution. But the fourth commandment is wholly religious in its requirements; to enforce a law on the basis of the fourth commandment, would be to enforce religion. But this does not tell all. In the account of the Washington Convention, in the *Detroit Christian Herald* (Baptist), of December 27, 1888, Col. Elliott F. Shepard is reported as having said that “Congress and the law-making powers in this country have virtually repealed the fourth commandment.” By this he of course referred to the neglect to enforce Sunday observance. It is not our intention to make any argument on what is plain enough without, namely, that Sunday and the fourth commandment have nothing whatever to do with each other; but taking him on his supposition, that repealing the fourth commandment would affect Sunday, we wish to point out sharply the position which the “American Sabbath Union” proposes to assume. Note well the following:—*BSRB 28.2*

Allowing that the failure to enact laws compelling people to keep Sunday, or the repealing of those already in existence, is a virtual repeal of the fourth commandment, then it follows that in their

efforts to secure the enactment and enforcement of such laws, they are working for the re-enactment of the fourth commandment. Is not that a logical conclusion? Certainly it is, and Colonel Shepard, as the representative of the Union, would admit it. Then mark this point:—*BSRB 29.1*

It was the Lord Jehovah who spoke the fourth commandment, with the other nine, from Sinai. It was God who enacted that law. Therefore the “American Sabbath Union,” in proposing to re-enact the fourth commandment, is proposing to re-enact the fourth commandment, is proposing to put itself in the place of God. Not only so, but it is putting itself above God, by assuming that it is more competent to vindicate his law than he is himself. It virtually says, “The Lord has been negligent in regard to his interests, and has allowed unrighteous governments to repeal the fourth commandment of his law; now we will take the matter into our hands and re-enact the commandment, and straighten things out for him.” In this it is showing itself a true child of the Papacy, that “man of sin,” the “son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” Is not the likeness perfect? In other words, Is it not trying to make of this nation an *image* of the Papal beast?*BSRB 29.2*

It would seem as though nothing more could be needed to show that the passage of this bill would really mark the union of Church and State; but to show that it is really regarded in that light, though not called by that name, we will quote from the *Christian Statesman* of December 27, 1888. The quotation will also show that the Sunday-Rest is a true National Reform measure. The article is an editorial entitled “A Frank and Earnest Word to Our Friends,” and after noting the progress of National Reform work, it says:—*BSRB 30.1*

“Since the last annual meeting, and since the foregoing appeal was made, several remarkable events have transpired which greatly strengthen the argument to increased liberality. A bill to provide for the nation a National Sabbath law has been introduced into the Senate of the United States, and two important hearings in support of it have been held before one of the most important of the Senate

Committees. The school question has been brought into unexpected prominence by stirring and remarkable controversies in Boston and Pittsburg; and this discussion has also been lifted to the floor of the National Legislature by the proposed Constitutional Amendment respecting establishments of religion and free public schools? Both of these measures involve the principles of National Christianity, and both afford such an opportunity for the discussion of these principles before the nation as was never before known in her entire history. They who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, cannot fail to perceive the immense significance of these and similar occurrences." *BSRB 30.2*

This is indeed most true. It is wonderfully significant that measures which confessedly "involve the principles of National Christianity," which is but another name for union of Church and State, should be so enthusiastically indorsed by the great religious bodies of this country, and by the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union. And yet they imagine that they are opposed to a union of Church and State! What spirit of blindness can have possession of them? *BSRB 31.1*

It may not be amiss, in passing, to show that this Sunday-Rest bill which was framed in response to the request of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, meets their approval. In the *Daily Union Signal* of October 22, 1888, is a copy of Mrs. Bateham's report at the annual meeting of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, in which we read this: "We were granted a hearing before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, and Senator Blair introduced a bill in its main features covering our requests." If there were no others, that statement alone would suffice to show that the Woman's Christian Temperance Union is pledged to the securing of "National Christianity," or Church and State union. *BSRB 32.1*

Effect of the Law

Just what effect will this bill have if it becomes a law? It has been stated, as already quoted, that it would give the ideal Sabbath of the Puritans; but how could this be, when it has force only where the United States Government has exclusive jurisdiction? A careful reading of the bill will show that although it is very strict as far as its jurisdiction extends, almost absolutely prohibiting all Sunday work of every description in the Territories, it does not directly affect any of the citizens of the States, except Government employes, and those engaged in inter-State railroad business.*BSRB 32.2*

But its indirect effect in the States will be scarcely less than its direct effect in places subject to the exclusive control of the United States. It is well known that the great obstacle in the way of enforcing existing Sunday laws in the various States, has been the United States Government. In the bearing on the Sunday-Rest bill before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, December 13, Mrs. Bateham said that the Woman's Christian Temperance Union based their claims and petitions on the following facts:
—*BSRB 32.3*

“1. Nearly every State has Sabbath laws, but the National Government has none, though greatly needed, since the question has become emphatically a national one, and the very perpetuity or loss of our national rest, the Christian Sabbath, seems to depend on its being protected by the Government from the encroachments of organized capital, and the reinforcements of State laws by National.*BSRB 32.4*

“2. It is in gross violation of nearly every State Sabbath law that railroads run their Sunday trains, yet these States are powerless to prevent it, since only Congress can control inter-State commerce.*BSRB 33.1*

“3. By the State laws ordinary labor and traffic is forbidden on Sunday, but in defiance thereof the United States Government keeps its post-offices open and sells as on other days, and sends its mail to all parts of the country.”—*Report, p. 22.BSRB 33.2*

It will be seen that the plea for a National Sunday law is made on the ground that the State Sunday laws are powerless without it. In that same committee meeting, Senator Blair, the chairman, stated that the general Government takes advantage of what the State has given to it in the way of jurisdiction over the post-offices, inter-State commerce, and the army and navy, to introduce practices that nullify their attempt to enforce Sunday laws, and said:—*BSRB 33.3*

“To prevent this, is the object of this legislation. That is all that is undertaken here. It is simply an act proposing to make efficient the Sunday-Rest laws of the States, and nothing else.”—*Report, p. 97.BSRB 33.4*

National Reformers have ever referred to the general Government as the great Sabbath-breaker, holding that the running of mail trains, and the keeping open of post-offices practically nullified all their efforts to have Sunday strictly observed. With this objection removed, there would be speedy and strict enforcement of the Sunday laws that already exist, and enactment of laws where there are none now.*BSRB 33.5*

To understand more fully what would be involved in Senator’s Blair’s proposal “to make *efficient* the Sunday-Rest bill of the States,” let us examine the Sunday law of the State of Tennessee. That law read thus:—*BSRB 34.1*

“If any merchant, artificer, tradesman, farmer, or other person, shall be guilty of doing or exercising any of the common avocations of life, or of causing or permitting the same to be done by his children or servants (acts of real necessity or charity excepted), on Sunday, he shall, on due conviction thereof before any justice of the peace of the county, forfeit and pay three dollars, one-half to the person who will sue for the same, the other half to the person who will sue for the same, the other half for the use of the county.”*BSRB 34.2*

Just think of it! It is proposed to give efficiency to such a law as that! To say that it is an infamous law, would be to speak of it in very mild terms. We have already shown how the enactment of the Blair bill would lead to the appointment of spies, to see if people are dodging church service on Sundays; but this law makes it possible to perpetrate even worse outrages, if such a thing were possible.

Under the Tennessee law, the farmer who should presume to hoe potatoes on Sunday, even though the lot were down by the woods, a mile from the public road, and more than that from any habitation, and though the soil were so sandy that the movement of the hoe could not be heard four rods away, and who should be detected by some wandering tramp, or by some spy on the lookout for such gross breaches of the public peace, may be brought before the magistrate and fined, and in default thereof be forced to lie indefinitely in jail.*BSRB 34.3*

Observe that the law prohibits *any person* from exercising any of the common avocations of life on Sunday. If a woman should do the family washing on Sunday, or even if she should be guilty of the atrocious act of darning her husband's socks on Sunday, and should be detected by some meddlesome busybody, she could also be remanded to jail, unless the money was forthcoming to pay the fine. It is needless to more than refer to the premium which such a law as that would place upon spying. It may be said that the Tennessee law will never be enforced according to the strict letter of it, and that we have supposed an impossible case. But the fact is, that in 1886, under the Tennessee Sunday law, men were arrested, and fined, and imprisoned, for quietly digging potatoes on Sunday for dinner, and for pulling up weeds out of their garden. And this was not in town, where people might see the work while passing to or from church, but in remote country districts, where the informer had to go out of his way in order to see the Sunday work. The persecution ceased only because of the attention that it was attracting from other States. But an effort is even now being made (February, 1889) to stir the people up to enforce the law; and with the backing of the National law, and the other States engaged in enforcing Sunday laws of their own, which by the passage of the Blair bill will have suddenly become "efficient," who can tell what would not be done? If they did such things in a green tree, what would they do in a dry tree? We say-and our authority for the assertion is the statements which we have already quoted from the friends of the Blair bill-that its passage would set up the Inquisition in this country. Are the American people ready to revive the wicked persecutions of the Dark Ages?*BSRB 35.1*

Pious Frauds

There is just one more feature of this Sunday-law business, and that is the frauds which its friends seem forced to perpetrate in order to carry it on. First of all, we shall notice the plea that this proposed Sunday law is solely for the benefit of the workingmen. Against this, we have all the statements of the National Sunday Association, and the language of the bill itself, that it is to guard the religious observance of Sunday. It will not be denied that some who work on Sunday would prefer not to, but not on conscientious grounds; but it is evident that the objection to Sunday labor is not general among workingmen, for if it were, all they would have to do would be to refuse to work on Sunday, and the matter would be settled without any law.*BSRB 36.1*

On Sunday, January 20, Rev. W. F. Crafts preached in Washington, in Dr. Sunderland's church, the First Presbyterian. His subject, of course, was "The American Sabbath." In the beginning of his discourse he stated that the present agitation was not brought about by the churches, but by the clamor of the workingmen everywhere, in behalf of a weekly rest-day. That sounds very well, until you hear testimony on the other side. The fact is that Mr. Crafts attended the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, and spoke for an hour in behalf of the National Sunday-Rest bill. Then he spent another hour answering questions, and at the close the petition was indorsed by vote. For proof of this, see *Journal of United Labor*, the official organ of the Knights of Labor, of November 29, 1888, in which the speech appeared in full. Now if these workingmen had been clamoring for a Sunday law, why should Mr. Crafts spend two hours of his valuable time, besides the time and expense of travel, to convince them that they ought to have one? Can anyone tell?*BSRB 36.2*

Again, he visited the National Council of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, and had a similar experience. He spoke for an hour, and then for another hour answered the questions that were showered upon him. Yet the *Daily Union Signal*, of October 22, 1888, in which this item is found, prefaced it by saying: "A great victory for Sabbath observance was won by Rev. W. F. Crafts, Thursday. He appeared before the National Convention of the

Brotherhood of Engineers, in session at Richmond, Va., and spoke an hour in behalf of the National Sabbath movement," etc. Now if these men had been frantically clamoring for a Sunday law, wherein did the victory consist? If the workingmen are so anxious to have a Sunday law, why does Mr. Crafts spend so much time trying to work them up to sign his petition? Isn't there a little discrepancy between Mr. Craft's statement and his actions?*BSRB 37.1*

The history of the affair shows that the movement started with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and was seconded by the churches. Not a single workingman was present at either hearing before the Senate Committee. Read the list of members of the "National Sabbath Committee," and you find no representative of any labor organization. The whole movement shows upon the face of it that it was started by the churches for the benefit of the churches. If the workingmen had been clamoring for a Sunday law, it is passing strange that none of them tried to secure one before the preachers started in, and that none of them have been in the councils or on the committees of the Sunday-law agitators.*BSRB 37.2*

But we have positive testimony to the effect that, although some workingmen have been induced to sign the petition, the workingmen as a body do not desire any Sunday law, feeling fully able to care for themselves in that respect, and fearing an ecclesiastical despotism far more than they do the exactions of capital.*BSRB 38.1*

We have before us a copy of *Ideas of Reform*, of Jan. 1, 1889, a paper published at Broken Bow, Nebraska, and devoted to the interests of the workingman. It is, in every sense of the word, a labor reform paper, and is as outspoken against monopolies of every description, and the oppression of the laboring man by soulless capital, as any labor paper that we have ever seen. We state these points, so that full weight may be given to the following, which we take from one of its editorials:—*BSRB 38.2*

"Fourteen million people have petitioned Congress, asking for the enforcement of a Sunday law. This is evidently preliminary to an attempt to unite the Church and State. A halt should be called at

once. Religion, by faith in God, is good, and no Christian, under our Constitution, is deprived of the privilege of observing Sunday as strictly as he desires. Religion, by law, by force, without conversion, is bad, and contrary to the principles of good government.... The United States Constitution says: 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.' Our petitioners would in substance say: 'Do away with the Constitution, and give us a law that we may imprison or fine everyone whom we have been unable to convert to our faith, and who does not give tribute to our support.' Now, if this clamor for a Sunday law, coupled with the Blair Educational bill-which advocates the teaching of the Christian religion in public schools-is not an attempt to unite the Church and State, neither was the act of Constantine in making Christianity the recognized religion of the Roman Empire. It is hardly time to allow 14,000,000 people to dictate how 60,000,000 people shall worship, in a free country like ours."*BSRB 38.3*

Why is it that, contrary to every fact in the case, the Sunday-law advocates persist in saying that they are acting for the workingmen, and in their behalf? Simply as a blind, so as to allay the fears of the people concerning a possible union of Church and State. If anybody can give a more charitable reason, and can substantiate it, we shall be happy to accept it.*BSRB 39.1*

The writer of the article from which we last quoted said: "It is hardly time to allow 14,000,000 people to dictate how 60,000,000 people shall worship, in a free country like ours." This brings us face to face, not with another fraud, simply, but with fraud upon fraud. As a matter of fact, not one-eighth of 14,000,000 people have signed the petition for a Sunday law. We can show from the most unexceptionable evidence, that this movement for the securing of a Sunday law. We can show from the most unexceptionable evidence, that this movement for the securing of a Sunday law is not only un-Christian, in that it is characterized by fraud and deception throughout, but that it is un-American, in that it allows a few men to stand as the self-constituted representatives of many people, and to act in their name, when they are ignorant of what is going on.*BSRB 39.2*

To begin with, we will refer again to the petition that has been circulated, and which it is claimed has upwards of 14,000,000 signatures. It begins thus:—*BSRB 40.1*

“The undersigned, adult residents of the United States 21 years of age or more, hereby earnestly petition your honorable body,” etc.*BSRB 40.2*

For petition in full, see page 15. Now take particular notice of the following direction, which is upon each petition:—*BSRB 40.3*

“When a labor organization, or church, or any other society, indorses the petition by vote, let the ‘name’ of the organization be signed, with the attesting signatures of the presiding officer and clerk or secretary, with place and date, and in the margin, under ‘number of petitioners,’ indicate the number of members in the organization petitioning.”*BSRB 40.4*

These statements concerning the petition may be verified by a copy of the petition itself. Now what does this mean? Just this: Suppose that Mr. Crafts, who has resigned the pastorate of his church in New York City, in order to devote his entire time to this work, visits a labor organization, as he did the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, and induces the members present to vote to indorse the petition. That fact is certified to by the presiding officer and the clerk, and the entire number of members belonging to the organization is indicated in the margin, and so the vote of the few stands as the indorsement of the many. The Knights of Labor number over 200,000 in the United States. At the meeting before which Mr. Crafts presented his petition, we will say that there were 200 present. That would be a good representation. Yet the vote of that 200, more or less, is counted as expressing the sentiment of over 200,000 men, although the men who were not there did not know that any such thing was to be voted on, and many of them would have voted against if it they had been there. Is this according to the American way of doing things? Is it not depriving the people of equal representation? Is it not dishonest?*BSRB 40.5*

But again: Suppose a church having 500 members, votes upon the petition at any regular meeting, and it is indorsed, although quite a number refrain from voting. Now it is a thing that would not occur

once in a hundred times, that all the members should be present. Indeed, in a church of that size it would be an impossibility for all to be present at any meeting, even if a special effort were made. Now, if three-fifths of them were present, and a majority should vote in favor of the petition, a vote of 250, or even 200, members would be counted as the indorsement of 500. Is this according to American, to say nothing of Christian, ideas of right.*BSRB 41.1*

But this is not all. It would probably be an impossibility to find any church organization having a fairly respectable membership, in which there would not be quite a number of young people less than twenty-one years old. Yet the entire membership would be represented on the petition, which says that all the petitioners are twenty-one years of age, or more. What explanation can be given for such a proceeding?*BSRB 42.1*

But there is more yet. On the 16th of January, 1889, all these petitions were presented in the Senate, and were formerly referred to the Committee on Education and Labor. As a sample, I quote from the *Congressional Record* of January 17, under the head of "Petitions and Memorials:"—*BSRB 42.2*

"The PRESIDENT *pro tempore* presented a petition of 148 citizens of the State of Kansas, praying for the passage of a Sunday-Rest law; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 42.3*

"MR. CULLOM. I present a petition of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Department of Sabbath Observance, praying for the passage of the law prohibiting the running of inter-State Sunday trains, Sunday mails, and military drills on the Sabbath. The petition is signed by 100 ministers of Chicago and vicinity, in the State of Illinois. I move that it be referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 42.4*

"The motion was agreed to.*BSRB 43.1*

"MR. CULLOM. I also present several bundles of petitions that I hold in my hand, on the same subject, signed, one of them by 1,706, another by 7,277, another by 1,000, and the fourth by 2,498 citizens of Illinois, praying for the same legislation. I move the

reference of the petitions to the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 43.2*

“The motion was agreed to.”*BSRB 43.3*

“MR. FAULKNER presented a petition of 2,594 citizens of West Virginia, praying for the passage of a National Sunday-Rest law; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 43.4*

“MR. PAYNE presented a petition of citizens of Ohio, praying for the passage of a National Sunday-Rest law prohibiting needless Sunday work in the Government’s mail and military service, and inter-State commerce; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 43.5*

“MR. HALE. I present a petition of the name kind, in favor of the passage of a National Sunday-Rest law, from labor organizations, churches, and other bodies in the State of Maine. I move the reference of the petition in the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 43.6*

“The motion was agreed to.”*BSRB 43.7*

This is sufficient to show the general tenor of the presentation of the petitions. In this manner petitions were presented from churches, ministers, Woman’s Christian Temperance Unions, labor organizations, etc., in twenty-one States and two Territories. Yet after these churches, temperance associations, labor organizations, etc., had been thus represented in petitions, Mr. Blair arose and spoke as follows, which we copy from the same issue of the *Congressional Record*, that of January 17, 1889:—*BSRB 43.8*

“MR. BLAIR. I present petitions of several bodies, praying for the passage of a Sunday-Rest law. Of the petitions, the following analysis is submitted by those who desire their presentation: —*BSRB 43.9*

Petitions from National Bodies

CONTENTS:

1. Individual signatures	407
2. Representative signatures by indorsements of bodies and meetings	14,174,337
Total	14,474,744

“Analysis of the latter:*BSRB 44.1*

“First indorsement is that of the American Sabbath Union, which was officially constituted by official action of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Home Missionary Society of the Baptist Church, the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (North and South), and the Synod of the Reformed Church, five denominations whose membership together is 5,977,693. Of the membership of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the indorsement of whose international convention stands second, at least 20,000 citizens of the United States. Of the Knights of Labor, the indorsement of whose international convention stands third, at least 219,000 citizens of the United States. The Presbyterian General Assembly, North, whose action stands next, had at the time of the indorsement 722,071 members. The convention of Christian Workers, whose indorsement is next, had 450 present when the unanimous vote of indorsement was taken. The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, which comes next, had 185,521 at the time of the vote. The Roman Catholics, for whom Cardinal Gibbons speaks, number 7,200,000.*BSRB 44.2*

Does the reader see the point? It is simply this: In order to swell the list of petitioners, the indorsements secured in the various States were first presented separately, and then presented again in bulk. If this was an honest way of doing, we cannot discern it. They have never claimed more than about 14,000,000 signatures (actual and by proxy) to their petitions, yet there were petitions presented from twenty-one States and two Territories, besides the grand total of 14,174,744, presented by Mr. Blair. But this is only a beginning.*BSRB 44.3*

Take the closing sentence of Mr. Blair's remarks. He said: "The Roman Catholics, for whom Cardinal Gibbons speaks, number 7,200,000." This statement has been often repeated. The January (1889) number of *Our Day* said editorially: "Cardinal Gibbons also sent him [Mr. Crafts] an official letter, indorsing the petition on behalf of the Plenary Council of the Roman Catholic Church." This would convey the idea that Cardinal Gibbons had been formally empowered to act in this matter for the entire Roman Catholic Church, children and all. Yet in the very same number of *Our Day* we find the following:—*BSRB 44.4*

"Cardinal Gibbons has indorsed the petition for a National Sunday-Rest law in the following letter, which is here for the first time published in full:—*BSRB 45.1*

"CARDINAL'S RESIDENCE,
408 N. CHARLES STREET, BALTIMORE,
December 4, 1888.*BSRB 45.2*

"REV. W. F. CRAFTS*Rev. Dear Sir:* I have to acknowledge your esteemed favor of the 1st inst., in reference to the proposed passage of a law by Congress 'against Sunday work in the Government's mail and military service,' etc.*BSRB 45.3*

"I am most happy to add my name to those of the millions of others who are laudably contending against the violation of the Christian Sabbath by unnecessary labor, and who are endeavoring to promote its decent and proper observance by legitimate legislation. As the late Plenary Council of Baltimore has declared, the due observance of the Lord's day contributes immeasurably to the restriction of vice and immorality, and to the promotion of peace, religion, and social order, and cannot fail to draw upon the nation the blessing and protection of an overruling Providence. If benevolence to the beasts of burden directed one day's rest in every week under the old law, surely humanity to man ought to dictate the same measure of rest under the new law.*BSRB 45.4*

"Your obedient servant in Christ,
"JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS,
"Archbishop of Baltimore."*BSRB 46.1*

That is all there is to it. Cardinal Gibbons never even *signed* his own name to the petition, and in his letter indorsing it he simply said, "I am most happy to add *my name*," etc. There is not the slightest intimation that he was acting for the great body of Catholics. Thus one name was multiplied by 7,300,000, and the number of petitioners augmented by that number. Will our friends please tell us how much difference, morally, there is between that and raising the figures on a draft?*BSRB 46.2*

But it is claimed that Cardinal Gibbons, being the head of the Catholic Church in America, is authorized to represent them, and that he always acts officially. To this we have to say (1) that when the "American Sabbath Union" says that, it recognizes the Papacy, and admits the whole principle of Popery to be correct according to its standard; and why shouldn't it? How much worse is it for Cardinal Gibbons to stand for 7,200,000 people who have never wagged their tongues in the matter, than for a few members of a Protestant church to represent the entire membership, most of whom may be ignorant of the proceeding? The difference between the two acts is simply the difference between forging a note for one hundred dollars and forging one for five hundred. And (2) if it is impossible for Cardinal Gibbons to act as an individual, if he must necessarily act only in an official capacity, if he cannot by any possibility separate any act of his from his office, how can they make it appear that they can take Sunday, which is a creature of the church, and wholly a church institution, and separate it from its religious character, enforcing only the civil aspect of the day? Truly "the legs of the lame are not equal."*BSRB 46.3*

Suppose, however, that Cardinal Gibbons had been authorized to speak for the entire Roman Catholic Church; in accordance with what law did they represent 7,200,000 Catholics as petitioners on a petition which certifies that each one is twenty-one years of age, or more? Everybody knows that there are not so many adult Catholics in the United States. Indeed, the last census does not give so many communicants to the Catholic Church, all told. So we tally another fraud. But this is not all.*BSRB 47.1*

Not content with presenting petitions from the churches, temperance unions, labor organizations, etc., separately, and then

putting them all in together, they presented many of them the third time. Thus: The entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church (North and South), and the Reformed Church, was represented on the petitions, every member thus being certified to be twenty-one years of age, or more. Then they presented the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union. But the very name indicates that the most, if not all, of these women are members of some church. The greater part of them are doubtless members of the churches which have just been named. So they were represented on the petitions a third time. The same is true, in part, of the Knights of Labor and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. Many of them are church members, the former organization especially being very largely Catholic. So they had a double representation. Surely this is enough; but it is not all.*BSRB 47.2*

Immediately following the record of the grand total of petitions which Mr. Blair presented, and its reference to the proper committee, the *Record* prints this:—*BSRB 48.1*

“MR. BLAIR. I have here a petition of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of New Jersey, with 6,000 members, of Indiana 2,500 members, of Massachusetts 6,000, Delaware 800, of Illinois 9,000, of Iowa 6,000, of Pennsylvania 6,000, of Dakota, 1,000, and the National nearly 200,000, praying Congress to instruct the Postmaster-General to make no further contracts which shall include the carriage of the mail on the first day of the week, and to provide that hereafter no mail matter shall be collected or distributed on that day, and also to forbid inter-State commerce on the first day of the week, by railroad trains, and to forbid military drills, musters, and parades of United States cadets, soldiers, and marines, on the first day of the week, in times of peace, as interfering not only with the soldier's right to the day of rest, but also with his rights of conscience. I move that the petition be referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 48.2*

“The motion was agreed to.*BSRB 48.3*

“MR. BLAIR. I present also the petition of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Department of Sabbath Observance,

the Illinois Sabbath Association, the American Sabbath Union, etc., 492 signatures. This is, however, the petition of that body in New Hampshire. I move its reference to the Committee on Education and Labor.*BSRB 48.4*

“The motion was agreed to.”*BSRB 49.1*

Just try to comprehend the thing. The Woman’s Christian Temperance Unions in the various States were at least partially represented along with the churches and other organizations. Then in Mr. Blair’s summary they were named as a body, numbering 185,521, and were also included in the churches. Then again petitions were presented from the Woman’s Christian Temperance Unions in eight States, and then the National Union was named again, with nearly 200,000 members; and after having counted all the women of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union in the Union States, three, and some of them four times, some of them were counted again, to make good measure. Truly that is making the most of women. We can’t imagine why they stopped presenting petitions. By the method which they adopted they might just as well as not have had fifty millions of signatures to their petition, and overwhelmed Congress then and there.*BSRB 49.2*

Well, here we rest the case, to await new developments. We have presented simple facts without color, or attempt at rhetorical flourish. The reader can decide for himself by what name he will call such proceedings. We have classed them under the head of “pious frauds,” after Killen, who says in his “Ancient Church:”—*BSRB 49.3*

“The code of heathen morality supplied a ready apology for falsehood, and its accommodating principles soon found too much encouragement within the pale of the church. Hence the pious frauds which were now perpetrated. Various works made their appearance with the sanction of some apostolic man appended to them, their fabrications thus hoping to give currency to opinions or to practices which might otherwise have encountered much opposition.”—*Period 2, sec. 2, chap. 5, paragraph 7. BSRB 49.4*

Mosheim also describes a very close parallel to what we have been considering. He says:—*BSRB 50.1*

“By some of the weaker brethren, in their anxiety to assist God with all their might [in the propagation of the Christian faith], such dishonest artifices were occasionally resorted to as could not, under any circumstances, admit of excuse, and were utterly unworthy of that sacred cause which they were unquestionably intended to support.”—*Commentaries, cent. 2, sec. 7.BSRB 50.2*

It may be that they thought that their cause was sacred; but it must be admitted that truth never compels one to tell a falsehood in its behalf. Only error is supported by error. The fact that such dishonest artifices were resorted to, is evidence that the mystery of iniquity was already working, that the fine gold was fast becoming dimmed, and that the purity of doctrine was lost. The church was far advanced in its apostasy, when it could resort to lying in defense of what it called the truth. And if, in the development of the union of Church and State in the early centuries, deception was used, what wonder that a similar course is pursued in attempting to form another such union in the nineteenth century?*BSRB 50.3*

We have not called attention to these things thus minutely for the sake of exhibiting the Sunday law agitators in a bad light. We are perfectly willing to grant that they are so blinded as not to realize, to the full extent at any rate, the exceeding crookedness of their actions. We do not ask the reader to judge them, but only to judge of the cause which demands, or even admits, such a course. A genuine coin is not helped by having a counterfeit passed with it; so truth can never be advanced by fraud. Nay, more; just as stealthy actions and a desire to cover up tracks betray the rogue who would creep into your house to spoil your goods, so do these crooked actions, and attempts to throw people off the track of the real purpose, betray the legislation which will creep into the houses of American citizens to rob them of their dearest treasure-their liberty. Will they not be warned?*BSRB 50.4*

Finally, if anyone whose serious attention is now called to this matter for the first time shall be led to question whether not only the legislation, but also the day, which requires such unrighteous methods to support it, is not a base counterfeit and a fraud, he will find before him a field worth of careful exploration. And may the Spirit of truth guide him in his research, and fill him with the love of

the truth, for the sake of Him who is not only the Way and the Life,
but the Truth. E.J.W.*BSRB 51.1*

